



## **LESOTHO ESTABLISHES COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON TRADE (LCCT) AND NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE (NTFC)**

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The government of Lesotho through the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) has established Lesotho Coordinating Committee on Trade (LCCT) and National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

When officiating the event, The Minister for Trade and Industry, Hon. Tefo Mapesela stated that LCCT aims to address the fragmented policy formulation process which is one of the major impediments to Lesotho's effective participation in international trade.

Mr. Mapesela said trade as an engine for growth, cuts across all economic and social sectors, therefore coordination of efforts in the development and implementation of trade policy as well as trade mainstreaming are critical to addressing issues of employment creation, export growth, diversification and sustainable development. He further elaborated that the Ministry of Trade and Industry is in a process of developing a comprehensive Trade policy with the support of a grant from the EU-SADC- Trade Related Facility. Through the fund, the Ministry of Trade and Industry will be able to implement the SADC Trade Protocol and the EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreements.

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement obligates all WTO Member States to create NTFC with the objective "to facilitate both domestic coordination and implementation of provisions of the TFA". The Minister said the committee is expected to boost and expedite movement, release and clearance of goods across borders. The establishment of the NTFC and its reporting structure, LCCT, is an effort by the Government to effectively and efficiently implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement to improve Lesotho's competitiveness to trade across borders, especially for land locked countries like Lesotho.